



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 4, No. 21, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Thursday 27 June 2024

Note: (DT) signifies a decision taken at Decision Time.

The meeting opened at 11.40 am.

1. General Questions: Questions were answered by Cabinet Secretaries and a Minister.

2. First Minister's Questions: Questions were answered by the First Minister (John Swinney).

3. Standing Order Rule Changes - Procedures on Consent in Relation to UK Parliament Bills: Martin Whitfield, on behalf of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee, moved S6M-13746—That the Parliament notes the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee's 4th Report, 2024 (Session 6), Standing Order Rule changes - Procedures on consent in relation to UK Parliament Bills (SP Paper 627), and agrees that the rule changes to Standing Orders set out in annexe B of the report be made with effect from 2 July 2024.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

4. Appointment of Scottish Minister: The First Minister (John Swinney) moved S6M-13771—That the Parliament agrees that Gillian Martin be appointed as a Scottish Minister.

The motion was agreed to.

5. Appointment of Junior Scottish Minister: The First Minister (John Swinney) moved S6M-13772—That the Parliament agrees that Alasdair Allan be appointed as a junior Scottish Minister.

The motion was agreed to.

6. Scottish Elections (Representation and Reform) Bill: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn) moved S6M-13758—That the Parliament agrees to the general principles of the Scottish Elections (Representation and Reform) Bill.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

7. Scottish Elections (Representation and Reform) Bill: Financial Resolution: The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government (Shona Robison) moved S6M-13523—That the Parliament, for the purposes of any Act of the Scottish Parliament resulting from the Scottish Elections (Representation and Reform) Bill, agrees to any expenditure of a kind referred to in Rule 9.12.3A of the Parliament's Standing Orders arising in consequence of the Act.

The motion was agreed to (DT).

8. Motion Without Notice: The Minister for Parliamentary Business (Jamie Hepburn), on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, moved without notice that, under Rule 11.2.4, Decision Time be brought forward to 2.28 pm.

The motion was agreed to.

9. Decision Time: The Parliament took decisions on items 3, 6 and 7 as noted above.

10. Action Mesothelioma Day 2024: The Parliament debated S6M-13487 in the name of Marie McNair— That the Parliament recognises Action Mesothelioma Day 2024, which is on 5 July 2024; understands that mesothelioma is a rare cancer that is usually caused by exposure to asbestos, with tiny fibres getting into the lungs and damaging them over time; notes that the cancer most commonly occurs in the lining of the lung, but can also occur in the lining of the abdomen and the lining of the heart, with symptoms including shortness of breath, chest pain, coughing and tiredness; understands that there are around 2,700 new mesothelioma cases in the UK every year, including around 200 in Scotland; recognises that Action Mesothelioma Day is a national event to raise awareness of asbestos and mesothelioma, raise vital funds to support the research into tackling mesothelioma, and to remember and support those who have been affected by the disease; notes with interest that a £2.1 million Cancer Research UK grant has been awarded to the University of Glasgow with the aim of answering the question of why it can take decades for exposure to the fibrous mineral to develop into cancer; applauds the long-standing and ongoing work of the Clydebank Asbestos Group, which has provided information and support to people with asbestos-related conditions for over 30 years; notes the calls for continued research into mesothelioma, and hopes for a successful Action Mesothelioma Day 2024.

11. Rural and Island Digital Connectivity Challenges: The Parliament debated S6M-13640 in the name of Beatrice Wishart— That the Parliament notes with concern that many households in rural and island Scotland face challenges regarding digital connectivity; understands that Ofcom reports that 25% of Shetland households have broadband speeds of less than 30Mbps; further understands that, despite the initial Scottish Government ambition to connect every household to superfast broadband by 2021 through the R100 programme, it is now estimated that full R100 rollout will not be achieved until 2028; notes the reported intention of telecommunications companies to retire the copper phone line network and replace phone lines with digital connections using fibre broadband; understands that this replacement is due by 2027; notes with concern reports that many households are unable to switch to digital phone lines due to lack of broadband connectivity in their area, which, it understands, can cause particular problems for customers with healthcare devices that use the phone line, or those who live in areas with poor mobile phone signal; expresses its disappointment that rural and island households are facing such difficulties, particularly in light of increasingly frequent adverse weather events, which, it understands, put rural and island households at risk of power outages; considers that poor 4G signal in rural and island areas has negative implications for businesses and education; understands that many households in Scotland are unable to be connected to smart meters due to poor connectivity of the smart meter network in their areas, with latest figures showing that less than 10% of households in Scotland’s island groups have smart meters; further understands that many of these households still use legacy radio teleswitch meters, with Scotland having a higher proportion of these meters than other parts of the UK; notes with concern that the radio teleswitch signal is due to be switched off by 30 June 2025, which, it believes, could leave households stuck paying higher tariffs; further notes the belief that a digital divide is detrimental, and notes the calls for both of Scotland’s governments to work together to address the digital connectivity challenges facing households in rural and island Scotland.

The meeting closed at 3.39 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
27 June 2024

Appendix
(Note: this Appendix does not form part of the Minutes)

Subordinate Legislation

Negative Instruments

The following instruments were laid before the Parliament on 27 June 2024 and are subject to the negative procedure—

Valuation (Proposals Procedure) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2024 (SSI 2024/186)

laid under section 3ZA(10) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1975

Waste (Materials Facilities) (Scotland) Regulations 2024 (SSI 2024/191)

laid under section 58(5) of the Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Act 2014

Laid Only Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 27 June 2024 and is not subject to any parliamentary procedure—

Valuation Timetable (Scotland) Amendment Order 2024 (SSI 2024/192)

laid under section 30(2) of the Interpretation and Legislative Reform (Scotland) Act 2010

Other Documents

The following documents were laid before the Parliament on 27 June 2024 and are not subject to parliamentary procedure—

Inspection of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service West Service Delivery Area (SG/2024/92) laid under Section 43C(5) of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005

MG ALBA Annual Report & Statement of Accounts 2023/2024 (SG/2024/130) laid under Schedule 19 (12) of the Broadcasting Act 1990

Scottish Civil Justice Council's Annual Report 2023/24 and Programme 2024/25 (SCJC/2024/01) laid under section 5(4) of the Scottish Civil Justice Council and Criminal Legal Assistance Act 2013

Scotland's Census 2022: Sexual Orientation and Trans Status or History (SG/2024/118) laid under Section 4(1) of the Census Act 1920

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